

Eyes on

High-Quality Child Care Services

A stimulating and caring
environment for children



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Early Childhood Development

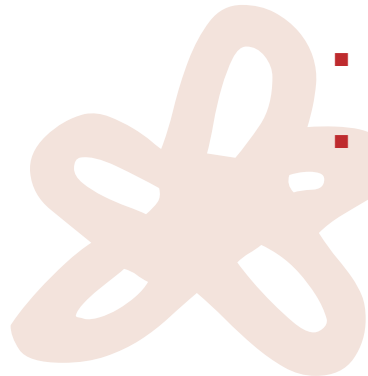
PARENTS



“It should also encourage cooperation, instruction following, and the development of social skills.”

What do we know?

- Positive experiences in early childhood have a positive long-term impact on children’s development.
- A child’s development is largely determined by the quality of the care provided by the parents.
- Warm and consistent care provided by parents helps prevent adjustment problems, whether or not a child attends child care.
- When choosing a child care centre, ask these questions:
 - Do the educators look after the children in a consistent, personalized and caring way?
 - Are they trained in child development and early childhood education?
 - What is the ratio of educators to children?
 - Do the educators encourage the children to participate in activities?
 - Does the child care centre’s learning program cover all aspects of child development (emotional, physical, motor, social, moral, linguistic and cognitive)?
- A high-quality child care centre responds sensitively and appropriately to children’s individual needs, stimulates their curiosity and recognizes their particular interests.
- It should also encourage cooperation, instruction following, and the development of social skills.
- A high-quality child care centre promotes the development of language skills and other skills needed to ensure a good start in school.
- If very young children spend most of their time in child care centres where staff turnover rates are high, or where educators are few or not very caring, children can suffer harmful consequences.



Paying attention to...

What can be done?

... choosing a child care centre that responds to the child's individual needs.

- Ask the child care management how many children are in each group. The fewer children there are in a group, the better it is for the child.
- Ask about the objectives of the child care centre's teaching program:
 - Does it support the child's overall development?
 - Does it respect differences among children?
 - Does it promote an approach that is adapted to each child?

... the methods used by the child care centre to stimulate the child's interest.

- Observe how the child care program helps the child to think (open questions, supporting the child in problem-solving).
- Observe how the outdoor and indoor spaces are organized to encourage the child's exploration, activity and creativity.

... making sure the child care centre encourages the child's efforts.

- Verify whether the child care centre celebrates what each child knows and can do.

... working in collaboration with the centre staff.

- Ask how you can get involved in the centre. (Can you visit the centre, observe your child in the group, or participate in activities?)
- Ask what communication methods are used (meetings, phone calls, log book).

... practices related to hygiene and nutrition.

- Ask how the child care centre prevents the spread of bacteria (policies regarding sick children) and ask to see the weekly menu to check the nutritional quality of the meals served.



Information

The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development identifies and summarizes the best scientific work on the social and emotional development of young children. It disseminates this knowledge to a variety of audiences in formats and languages adapted to their needs.

For a more in-depth understanding of child care services, consult our experts' articles in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, available free of charge at www.child-encyclopedia.com.

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